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THE

# BURNING OF FALMOUTH

(Now Portland, Maine),

BY CAPT. MOWATT, IN 1775.

BY

WILLIAM GOOLD,  
OF WINDHAM, MAINE.

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Prepared at the request of the MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, and read before it Feb. 19, 1873.  
Reprinted from the NEW-ENGLAND HIST. AND GEN. REGISTER for July.

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BOSTON:  
FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION.

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## BURNING OF FALMOUTH IN 1775.

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WITHIN a few months an article has appeared in the *Amesbury* (Mass.) *Journal* on the Sparhawk family of Kittery, by Mr. John G. Whittier. I have not seen the article itself, but the following which purports to be an extract, has been copied into several papers :

"In 1775 Capt. Mowatt, of the British war ship Canceau, with three other armed vessels, anchored off Portsmouth, under orders to bombard and destroy the town. He privately went on shore and entered the spacious Sparhawk mansion, at Kittery Point. He became so fascinated with Mary Sparhawk that she persuaded him to save the town and sail to Portland, then Falmouth, which he laid in ashes."

I have no knowledge of the authority for this statement.<sup>1</sup> It probably rests upon tradition, but I think it is an error. That there was a Miss Mary Hirst Sparhawk, of the age of about twenty years, then living at her father the Hon. Nathaniel Sparhawk's splendid mansion at Kittery Point, there is no doubt. That she was fascinating, is equally certain; for history says she fascinated Dr. Charles Jarvis, of Boston, and married him. On the death of her husband she returned, about the year 1788, to the home of her childhood, and died there in 1815. One of her brothers, Wm. Pepperrell Sparhawk, in compliance with the will of his grandfather, Sir William Pepperrell, had succeeded to his house, title, and the most of his large estate. By an act of the general court, he dropped the name of Sparhawk, and became William (afterward Sir William) Pepperrell. He with all the family adhered to the mother-country at the breaking out of the revolution.

<sup>1</sup> We learn that Mr. Whittier gave this tradition upon the authority of Brewster's *Rambles About Portsmouth*, 21 ser., p. 187.

The confiscation act of 1778 swept away all his property except the plate, which was very valuable, and which was by that act allowed to be removed. Two or three pieces were given to individuals and are still preserved, but what remained was considered of such value that Col. Moulton, of York, with six soldiers, was ordered to guard its conveyance to Boston for shipment to its owner in London, whither he had gone in 1775. He died there in 1816, aged 70.<sup>1</sup>

It is well known that, during the colonial troubles, the Sparhawk house was the rendezvous and hiding-place of most of the chief loyalists of the vicinity. Both of my great-grandfathers were Kittery men: one of them sent his oldest son to Bunker Hill, and both took the opposite side to the Sparhawks. The fame of the tory gatherings at that house has been handed down as a family tradition. The fires of hospitality still burn in the broad fireplaces of this now restored home of colonial aristocracy. Your society and their invited guests will recollect their polite reception at this house, on their tour to York and Kittery, in the autumn of 1871. Capt. Mowatt, in the British sloop-of-war *Canceau*, had been on the New-England station a year or more, and no doubt had, while patrolling the eastern coast, often visited the fine harbor at the mouth of the Piscataqua; and as the Sparhawk house and its occupants were prominent among the celebrities of that aristocratic neighborhood, he had probably often been their welcome guest. We can readily imagine him landing from his boat at the stairs at the foot of the lawn, where a few years before the elder Sir Wm. Pepperrell had kept his barge, and negro crew in uniform, and entering that long avenue of elms whose stumps we saw, now sad monuments of vandalism. The house has been restored in the original style, but the elms cannot be in one generation as they were when the British captain, in knee-breeches and buckles, laced coat with ruffles at his hands, cocked hat with gold loop and button, hurried over that ornamental pavement (yet perfect, although 130 years old), to spend an hour with the courtly Miss Mary, while waiting for the ebb-tide to take his ship to sea. This was not only a splendid mansion, but, like an eagle perched on a crag watching its prey, from its elevated situation he could watch the colonists in their little vessels far at sea. No one would better appreciate this scene and its surroundings than Mr. Whittier, nor is there one who could describe it in more befitting verse. We know that young ladies, of Miss Sparhawk's age and station, often have great influence with men in power. Sacred history tells us of one who, on Herod's birth day, danced before him and pleased him so much that at her request he gave her the head of the moral censor who had displeased him;

<sup>1</sup> See an article on the Pepperrell Genealogy by the late Usher Parsons, M.D., in the NEW-ENGLAND HIST. AND GEN. REGISTER, vol. xx. pp. 1—6.

but I think there was no hint that Miss Sparhawk practised any blandishments before the naval commander, only that he became so fascinated that at her request he spared the neighboring town, and poured out his wrath on poor devoted Falmouth.

After this long preface, we will examine the authentic history of the transactions at Falmouth, during the colonial difficulties, and before the burning, which will show that Mowatt had a grudge against the town, and that Admiral Graves, who commanded the British fleet then blockading Boston, had said that if certain things were done, "he would send an armed force and beat the town down about their ears." These things were done, and no doubt Mowatt was too glad to execute the orders he had solicited from the admiral.

My authorities for this narration of facts, are principally the journals of the two ministers of the town, begun long before and kept through the revolution. That of the Rev. Thomas Smith was compiled by Samuel Freeman, Esq., in 1821. Mr. Freeman was a native of old Falmouth, and witnessed the commotions until a short time before the bombardment. He was elected sole delegate from Falmouth to the provincial congress, and was in attendance at its session in Watertown. He held that office, by reëlection, three years, during two of which he was secretary of that body. His public services well qualified him to compile the journal, and to supply those copious notes and explanations which his edition contained. Copies of his edition are now very rare. I know of only one perfect copy. It is to be regretted that Mr. Willis felt compelled to omit, in his edition, the most of the appendix to Mr. Freeman's, which contains his notes and explanations. I have a distinct recollection of Mr. Freeman fifty years ago, whose venerable figure, in the costume of colonial times, occupied the deacon's seat beneath the high pulpit, and facing the congregation, in the old wooden church of the first parish in Portland. He died in 1831, aged 87 years.

Having given my authorities, I will proceed with my sketch, which I think will explain why the town was burned.

The people of the county of Cumberland, and especially those of Falmouth, began early to express indignation at the acts of Parliament bearing on the colonies. Soon after the passage of the odious stamp act of 1765, a vessel arrived at Falmouth from Halifax with the hated stamps, and they were deposited in the custom-house. The people immediately assembled and marched to the custom-house, demanded and received the stamps, then fixed them to the top of a pole, carried them in procession through the streets, to a fire prepared for the purpose, and burned them.

In 1771 in a town meeting the citizens "resolved that we will not buy

nor sell any India tea whatever, after this third day of Feb. until the act that lays a duty on it is repealed." There were then 2500 lbs. of tea in the hands of the dealers in town. Another resolve, passed at this meeting, acknowledges their obligation to "the people of Boston, for their early notice of approaching danger," and for "their intrepid behavior on the late tea-ships' arrival, and trust they will still be our watch-tower, and they may depend on our utmost endeavors to support them at all times, in defense of their rights and liberties." Also, "we rejoice that though surrounded by fleets and armies, you yet remain firm and resolute." At the close of the proceedings the town "voted that a committee be chosen to meet committees of other towns to consult on the alarming state of public affairs."

On the day of the closing of the port of Boston, June 14, 1774, the bell of the meeting-house in Falmouth was muffled and tolled from sunrise until nine o'clock in the evening. The result of the vote of the town in February, inviting other towns to choose delegates to meet theirs, was that a county convention was held at Mrs. Greele's little one-story tavern, in Falmouth, on the 21st day of September, 1774.

This was the first political county convention held in Cumberland, of which the record has been preserved. It was composed of thirty-three delegates from the nine old towns of the county. Although a hundred years save one, have intervened since it was held, there has been no improvement on the course then adopted to secure a true expression of the popular will. The people of the country towns chose their delegates who attended, and then they went themselves, to see that their delegates obeyed their instructions, as the record shows. After organizing by the choice of the Hon. Enoch Freeman for chairman, and his son Samuel Freeman, our historian, for clerk, the record says: "A committee from the body of the people who were assembled at the entrance to the town, waited on this convention to see if they would choose a committee of one out of each town, to wait on Mr. Sheriff Tyng, to see whether he would act in his office under the late acts of Parliament for regulating the government." By these acts the appointment of all civil officers was taken from the people and vested in the crown.

Sheriff Tyng was summoned before the convention and attended, and subscribed to a written declaration "that he would not as sheriff of the county, or otherwise, act in conformity to, or by virtue of, said acts, unless by the general consent of said county." This declaration was voted to be satisfactory to the convention.

While these proceedings were going on in the convention, the people from the country had marched to the town house. The record continues: "The

convention then formed themselves into a committee to accompany Mr. Sheriff Tyng to the body of the people, to present the declaration." The people "voted it satisfactory, and after refreshing themselves, returned peaceably to their own homes."

The convention met again in the afternoon, and a committee, of whom Samuel Freeman was chairman, reported a long and spirited preamble and resolutions, which were adopted. The second resolution would, if carried out now, be a public benefit. It was as follows: "That every one would do his utmost to discourage lawsuits, and likewise compromise disputes as much as possible." "Each member was interrogated separately, and pledged himself not to accept any commission under the late acts of parliament."

Mr. Freeman says his notes, after he left Falmouth, were transcribed from the letters of a gentleman in Falmouth to his friend in Watertown. The friend in Watertown was no doubt himself, as he was then in attendance at the Provincial Congress, and the only delegate from Falmouth. From some circumstances and expressions I am led to believe that the writer of the letters was Gen. Jedediah Preble, a leading merchant of the town, and a member of the committee of inspection.

Capt. Samuel Coulson had been for several years engaged in the mast business between Falmouth and Bristol, England, from whence he came, and had married a daughter of the elder Dr. Coffin, of Falmouth, and resided in the doctor's house on King street. He had built a very large ship for those days at the foot of his street. She was of 1000 tons. To ship masts required large vessels.

Capt. Coulson was violently opposed to the popular sentiment of the colonies, and made himself very obnoxious to the people. On the second of May, 1775, a vessel of Coulson's arrived from Bristol, with rigging, sails, and stores, for the new ship. There was a committee of inspection, composed of leading men of the town, one of whom was Samuel Freeman. This committee was called together at the library chamber the same day of the arrival of Coulson's vessel.

There was a compact between the colonies called the "American Association," the provisions of which may be understood from what took place in the committee meetings. Coulson was by vote desired to attend on the committee. In answer to questions he stated that the vessel was from Bristol, with stores and materials for his new ship. A sub-committee was chosen to go on board and see if there were any other goods there.

At an adjourned meeting of the committee the next day, it was voted that to allow Capt. Coulson to land his goods, and appropriate them to fit out his new ship, would be a violation of the "American Association," and directed that they be sent back to England without breaking the packages.

This was communicated to Capt. Coulson by a sub-committee. Coulson immediately attended, and said the vessel must be repaired before she could go to sea, and in order to do that the freight must be landed; but the vote was adhered to, and the proceedings of the meeting were by vote, posted up in a public place in the town. Instead of obeying the order to return the goods to England, Coulson left for Boston, under the pretence of asking leave of the provincial congress to rig his ship, and procured the assistance of Capt. Mowatt in the sloop-of-war Canceau, to aid and protect him in rigging and loading his ship, and proceeded to land his materials.

During the excitement caused by Coulson's bringing the vessel to assist him in violating the provisions of the Association, on the 21st of April news arrived of the battle of Lexington. On the 23d a town-meeting was held, and spirited proceedings were adopted, notwithstanding the Canceau was lying in the harbor, whose commander, Coulson, and others were constantly urging to make some demonstration. The news of the battle of Lexington set the whole country in a blaze of excitement. At Falmouth a company of 60 soldiers was raised and hurried off to Cambridge.

Next came, what Mr. Freeman calls, "Thompson's war." On Tuesday, the 9th of May, Col. Samuel Thompson, of Brunswick, with about fifty soldiers, came in boats and landed secretly on the north side of the neck, and encamped in a grove of pines. Each man had a small sprig of spruce in his hat; and a small spruce tree with the lower branches cut off was their standard. They seized and detained several persons who happened to pass that way, in order to conceal their camp from the towns-people. About one o'clock, P. M., Capt. Mowatt, his surgeon, and the Rev. Mr. Wiswall, of St. Paul's Church, were walking for pleasure in the vicinity, when they were seized and made prisoners. As soon as Lieut. Hogg, then in command of the Canceau, heard of the capture of Capt. Mowatt, he sent a threatening letter on shore. Gen. Preble, in a letter to the provincial congress dated on the 14th, says "he clapped springs to his cables and swore if the gentlemen were not released before six o'clock, he would fire on the town. He fired two cannon, and although there were no shot in them, it frightened the women and children to such a degree that some crawled under the wharves, some down cellar, and some out of town."

Some of the prominent men of the town visited Thompson's camp to urge the release of the prisoners. Thompson and his men were inflexible, but night coming on, they concluded to march the prisoners to Marston's tavern for a more sheltered consultation. The soldiers, including a Falmouth company which had assisted in the escort, were paraded in front of the house. Thompson argued that open hostilities between the colonies and the mother-country existed; that Providence had thrown the prisoners

in his way, and that they were rightly held. He finally found that the whole town was against him, and at about nine o'clock he concluded to release them, by their giving their parole to come on shore the next morning; Gen. Preble and Col. Freeman pledging themselves for them. The principal reason given by the Falmouth men for urging their release, was that several vessels were daily expected with corn and flour, of which the town stood very much in need.

Parson Smith, in his journal, under date of the 26th of June, says:—“People are apprehensive of a famine, there being a scarcity of corn and flour.” A few days after, he mentions the arrival of three vessels, “with corn and flour.” “So we are plentifully relieved from all fears of famine. Blessed be God.”

At the appointed hour of nine, on Wednesday morning, Thompson began to look for his prisoners, but none came; whereupon his men became furious, and seized their sureties, Preble and Freeman, and kept them all day without dinner. In the afternoon they sent to Mowatt to know why he did not keep his parole. His reply was, that one of his men whom he had sent on shore to his washerwoman, had overheard several threats from soldiers to shoot him as soon as he made his appearance, and he declined coming. During the afternoon a large force of militia from the country, numbering five or six hundred, arrived, and being greatly enraged on learning of Mowatt's release, threatened violence to Gen. Preble and Col. Freeman, the sureties.

All the officers of the militia, including those of Falmouth, next resolved themselves into a board of war, for the examination of tories, and summoned several persons before them. Some came. The Rev. Mr. Wiswall had not gone on board the ship, and attended at the appointed time. In answer to questions, he declared his abhorrence of the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, and was released. Several others were examined, but none were punished. To keep peace and secure his release with Col. Freeman, Gen. Preble was obliged to furnish the troops with several barrels of bread, a quantity of cheese, and two barrels of rum for each company.

The soldiers entered Capt. Coulson's house and took what they wanted, and used the house for a barrack. Some of them became exhilarated by the liquor found in Coulson's cellar, and one, named Calvin Lombard, went down to the shore and fired two balls from a musket, deep into the side of the Canceau. The fire was returned from a “fusee,” but no damage was done.

Thursday, the 11th, was a general fast, which Gen. Preble and Col. Freeman were not prepared for, as the soldiers had obliged them to fast the day before.

The soldiers seized one of Coulson's boats and dragged it through the streets, to a place of safety, and the next day they seized one of Mowatt's, and hauled it to the same place. Mowatt threatened to fire on the town if they were not returned, but Mr. Freeman's friend writes to him at Watertown that "he has not fired yet, and here I sit writing at my desk in the old place, being fully convinced that Mowatt never will fire on the town in any case whatever." He also writes: "the soldiers have to-day carried off Mr. Tyng's Bishop, a piece of plate worth 500 pounds, old tenor, and his laced hat." These were afterwards returned to Mrs. Ross, the mother of Mrs. Tyng, by a resolve of the provincial congress. The property destroyed in Coulson's house, and valued at 140 pounds lawful money, was paid for by authority of the same resolve.

On Friday afternoon, the last of the soldiers left town, much to the relief of the people. On Saturday, Mowatt made another demand for the boats, but Thompson's men had taken them away when they left. On Monday, Mowatt and Coulson sailed with their ships for Portsmouth and Boston.

On the 8th of June, the Senegal of 16 guns, Capt Dudington, arrived from Boston, and anchored near the islands, and on the 12th Coulson arrived again in his new ship, and anchored near the Senegal. Sheriff Tyng, who had taken refuge with his friends in Boston, was with Coulson. In reply to a letter, Capt. Dudington of the Senegal wrote the committee that "his orders were to protect the persons and property of his majesty's faithful subjects and not to distress them."

The wives of Sheriff Tyng and Capt. Coulson were permitted to go on board the ships; but the committee would not consent that Coulson should have his masts with which he had intended to load the ship, as he was a declared enemy of the town. On his arrival, the people had floated them up the harbor out of his reach, the provincial congress having passed a resolve to prevent tories taking their property out of the country.

Coulson next sent an armed boat to the mouth of Presumpscot river, ostensibly for water, but in reality to look out masts and timber for a cargo for his ship. The people seized his boat, guns and men, but finally released his men. Coulson finding he could not get his masts and was losing his boat, sailed without them. These masts were secured in a cove at Cape Elizabeth, near Vaughan's bridge, where they remained over 60 years. All left of them in 1835 were built into Sawyer's wharf, at the foot of High street; and they are now covered by Commercial street.

After Capt. Coulson had left Boston for Falmouth to take in his masts, Capt. Crandall, of Harpswell, was taken by one of Admiral Graves's fleet and carried into Boston, and on his release he reported his interview with

the admiral. After the burning of the town, to prove that it was done by order of the admiral, Capt. Crandall's sworn statement was procured. I here copy a part of his affidavit from Freeman's notes:

"That sometime in the month of June last, I sailed from Harpswell for Salem, and on my passage there I was forcibly taken by an armed vessel and carried into Boston. And being in the presence of Admiral Graves, he asked me if such a man-of-war (he named her, but I have forgotten her name) had arrived at Falmouth. I answered that I heard she had. He then asked me if I thought she would be opposed by the people. I answered I could not tell. He then asked me if Capt. Coulson was loading at Falmouth. I replied that I had heard he met with such opposition from the people as to prevent it. Upon which the admiral said: 'You may tell them that if they will not let him load, I will send a ship, or ships, and beat the town down about their ears.'

(Signed) PHILIP CRANDALL.

Sworn to on the 1 of Jan. 1776, before Wm. Sylvester,  
of Harpswell, Justice of the Peace."

Dr. Deane says (page 341 of his diary): "Capt. H. Mowatt, of Scotland, obtained, by his most urgent solicitation, an order from Graves, &c." Mr. Willis, in his History of Portland, page 518, says: "The vessels came here direct from Boston, and no doubt can be entertained but that the order proceeded from Admiral Graves, who then commanded on this station, whose mind had been influenced by the representations of Mowatt, Coulson, and others." In a letter from Gov. Bowdoin to Gov. Pownall in London, dated in Boston in 1783, he says "The town was wantonly burnt, by order of Admiral Graves."

From the authorities quoted I think all will be convinced that the bombardment was by Admiral Graves's orders, in consequence of representations from Mowatt and Coulson.

I will now give a condensed sketch of the burning. The facts are principally taken from the letters of the Hon. Enoch Freeman, chairman of the committee of safety, to his son Samuel in Watertown, with the statements of other eye-witnesses.

On the 16th of October, 1775, the people of Falmouth were surprised by the arrival below of a squadron of four armed vessels and a store-vessel. The wind being fresh from the northwest the vessels anchored near the islands. When the people learned that Capt. Mowatt was in command, they supposed he had come for sheep and cattle, for the British forces in Boston. As there were large stocks of cattle on the islands, the enlisted

men composing one company and part of another were at dusk sent down quietly to guard the sheep, cattle and hay.

The next day, Tuesday, the wind being still ahead and very strong, the vessels warped up the harbor, and anchored in line in front of the town. By a drawing still preserved, we are enabled to fix the position and rig of each vessel. The Canceau of 16 guns, the flag-ship, was anchored opposite the foot of India street. Next above was a schooner of 12 guns. Then the ship Cat of 20 guns, opposite Union wharf, and a bomb sloop above all. The store-schooner took a station below the armed vessels.

Late in the afternoon, Capt. Mowatt sent an officer on shore with a letter, in which he said the town had been guilty of the most unpardonable rebellion, and from having it in orders to execute a just punishment on the town of Falmouth, he gave two hours for the removal of the "human specie" out of the town, at the period of which a red pennant would be hoisted at the main-top-gallant-mast head, with a gun.

Dr. Deane says: "Near sunset he made known his errand by a flag (of truce), with a letter full of bad English, and worse spelling."

The Rev. Jacob Bailey of Pownalborough, who had been officiating at St. Paul's church after Mr. Wiswall had left, says in a letter: "The officer landed at the foot of King street amid a prodigious assembly of people and was conveyed with uncommon parade to the town-house, and silence being commanded, a letter was delivered, and read by Mr. Bradbury, a lawyer: but not without such visible emotion as occasioned a tremor in his voice." After repeating the contents or import of the letter, he says: "It is impossible to describe the amazement which prevailed on the reading of the alarming declaration. A frightful consternation ran through the assembly; a profound silence ensued for several moments. Then a committee of three was chosen, one of whom was Dr. Coffin, brother of the wife of Capt. Coulson, to wait on the commodore." This and much more is from the pen of one who received his support from the mother country and was a loyalist. His description of the bombardment, and the fright of the people, makes the scene appear almost ludicrous.

Besides Dr. Coffin, mentioned by Mr. Bailey, Gen. Preble and Robert Pagan were on the committee. It is worthy of remark that this committee were all Episcopalians, and members of St. Paul's parish. The committee immediately went on board the Canceau. In answer to their remonstrance, Capt. Mowatt informed them that his orders from the admiral did not authorize him to give any warning to the inhabitants, but they required him to come "opposite the town with all possible expedition [*not to go into Portsmouth,*] and there burn, sink and destroy," and that he had taken it upon himself to give warning, at the risk of losing his commission.

The committee say, "we expostulated with him upon the severity of such orders, and entreating that if possible some method might be fallen upon to save the town; or at least to give the inhabitants an opportunity of moving some of their effects; upon which he said, that if the inhabitants would in the morning, by eight o'clock, deliver up four pieces of cannon which were then in the town, with their arms in general, and ammunition, he would in that case do no harm to the town until he had despatched an express to the admiral, who he did not doubt would order him to save the town. And as a token that his demand would be complied with, he required that eight small arms should be delivered up by eight o'clock that evening, which should be the condition of the town's being safe until eight o'clock the next morning.

The committee told him that his demands would not in their opinion be complied with, but that they would inform the town of his conditions. The committee communicated the result of their interview with Capt. Mowatt to the people, who were waiting in the town-house. No vote was taken, but it was thought best to send the small-arms that evening, in order to gain time to remove the sick, with the women and children, and what property could be got away that night.

Wednesday morning, the 18th, the citizens met, and "resolved by no means to deliver up the cannon and other arms," and sent the same committee with the answer.

I must digress a little here to supply a little historical matter not found in the books. By examining Mr. Freeman's notes, it will be seen that there were no cannon in Falmouth at the time of Mowatt's visit in May, and that he had sent a letter on shore then, saying that he had heard that cannon were to be brought from the country to destroy his ship, and threatened to fire on the town in case of such an attempt.

We find, at the burning in October, that there were four cannon in town. There is no written account of where these guns came from. I am glad to be able to explain this. In 1743 the Massachusetts colony furnished the eastern frontier-towns with small cannon to defend their timber-forts against the Indians, and to give the alarm to other settlements in case of an attack. Windham's share of these guns was a long nine-pounder iron gun, which was mounted in front of the fort, within the stockade, to fire as an alarm gun, and two swivels, one for each watch-box at the diagonal corners of the fort. This nine-pounder and one swivel, it is well known, were carried to Falmouth when mother England began to be more feared than the Indians. These guns were finally put on board the privateer Reprieve, Capt. Stone, of Falmouth, in 1776.

Gorham did not fare quite as well as Windham in the distribution of the

guns: they got only two six-pound swivels, which were in their fort in 1775. One of them was fired when the Indians attacked the settlers in 1716, which brought twelve armed men from Falmouth to their assistance. Of course they were in duty bound to assist their deliverers. These two guns, tradition says, were carried to Falmouth at the commencement of the revolutionary troubles, and an effort was made to have them returned, but without success. It was undoubtedly these four guns which Mowatt tried in vain to secure. Perhaps one reason why the Falmouth people hung to them with such tenacity, was that they were borrowed.

We will now return to the negotiations about these guns on Wednesday morning. We left the committee on their way to the ship, with the answer of the town's people to Mowatt's demand. They were directed to spend as long a time on board as possible, to give time to secure more property. They remained on board until half-past eight o'clock, when they were requested by Mowatt to go on shore. He probably felt sore at the refusal of the citizens to be disarmed. The committee obtained half an hour to get out of the way themselves.

Prompt at the moment of 9 o'clock, the dreaded signal went up "to the main-top-gallant-mast head with a gun" on board the flag-ship, followed immediately by the blood red pennant on all the other vessels: an appropriate color under which to commit such a dastardly act.

Col. Enoch Freeman, in his letter to his son, says: "the firing began from all the vessels with all possible briskness, discharging on all parts of the town, which lay on a regular descent towards the harbor, an horrible shower of balls from three to nine lbs. weight, bombs, carcasses, live shells, grape-shot, and musketballs. The firing lasted, with very little cessation, until six o'clock, P. M., during which several parties came on shore to set buildings on fire. Parties of our people and others from the neighboring towns ran down to oppose them, and it is thought killed several."

I am writing this in a house the frame of which was partly raised that morning. The men employed heard the guns ten miles off, and knew what they meant, and they hurried away to the assistance of Falmouth.

Of the parties who landed to set fires, one officer was struck down and disarmed near the present custom house, according to Dr. Deane.

I saw, 50 years ago, a tin speaking-trumpet, nearly eaten up by rust, which was taken from an officer with a torch in his hand. This, with several cannon-shot, was kept in a closet under the high pulpit of the old meeting-house of the first parish. The shot had pierced the venerable structure, and set it on fire; but the fire was extinguished. This trumpet and the shot were then kept there as mementos of the burning. One shot is still preserved. I have never seen this trumpet alluded to in any account of the bombardment.

None of the town's people were killed, and only one was wounded. Widow Alice Greele, who kept the fashionable tavern of the town, saved her house by remaining in it, and extinguishing the flames when it caught fire. The selectmen, in a published statement, say that about three quarters of the buildings, including 130 dwelling houses, St. Paul's (Episcopal) church with the bell, the town house, a new fire-engine, and the public library were consumed. Only one or two wharves escaped the flames. What vessels were not consumed were taken away by the enemy, for such we must now call them.

On Pointer's draught, already mentioned, every house, and store, and public building is drawn as it stood before the fire; those which were destroyed are so marked. This draught was sent to Dr. Deane to correct, which he did. In a letter to Mr. Freeman on the subject, he says: "Let barns, &c., be placed where you can recollect any, and perhaps it would not be amiss to make some where you *do not* recollect any." It was then the intention to have it engraved immediately, but this was not done until 1849.

The first tears I ever shed for another's misfortunes were, I think, for the suffering women and children of Falmouth. I often heard their story repeated by an old lady, who lived near my father's, until I was afraid to go home in the evening for fear of meeting Mowatt, or some of his incendiaries, with a fire-brand. This good woman, at the time of the burning, lived in the town, in "Clay Cove." Her husband had enlisted in the continental army, intending to leave his wife and child in their snug home in Falmouth. On the arrival of the ships he was one of those who went to the islands to guard the cattle and sheep, and could not return until the firing had commenced. His name was Barton, and he was then about 28 and his wife 20 years old. Mrs. Barton remained in her house waiting for her husband, until the hot shot and shells began to fall near, and several of the neighbouring buildings were on fire, and her own dwelling had become untenable. She could wait no longer. She tied up her only feather bed with some small articles of clothing in a sheet, and slung it over her shoulder. She then took her little boy on her other arm and fled from the burning town. To reach a place of safety she was obliged to walk nearly a mile through the most thickly settled part of the town, with the ships in full view. Several times bombs with their smoking fuses fell near her, and she quickened her pace to escape the explosion. With many others she took shelter under the high ledges near the Casco street church, which have since been blasted away. The vicinity was then a grove of oaks, which gave Oak street its name. A 3 lb. shot fell near her, which she secured. Here her husband found her on his return from the islands, and here they remained

until nearly night. When the firing had slackened they ventured out, and, after depositing their bed in a place of safety, walked to her father's in Windham, eleven miles; one carrying the child, and the other the cannon shot, and occasionally changing.

Their dwelling and household goods were burnt, and they were compelled to begin the world anew. Barton and his wife's father built a small log house half a mile from the father's, and here he left his wife and joined Capt. Richard Mayberry's company as corporal. This was the fifth company of the eleventh regiment of the Massachusetts Bay forces, in the army commanded by Gen. Gates at the capture of Burgoyne in 1777. This company was also in the battles of Monmouth and Hubbardston. At the end of his term of three years service, Barton left the army, and was paid off in paper money which was almost worthless. He came home and went to work with a will, but was soon after killed by a falling tree. His widow suffered many hardships in her poverty, but a government pension very much relieved her declining years. She died in 1841, aged 86.

On the day set apart for the commemoration of the soldiers' services and sufferings, I am careful that Barton's grave is not forgotten.







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